

CLIFMOND SHAMEERUDEEN

Christian History of East Indians of Guyana

Historical Footprints

Guyana is the only English-speaking country of South America and is part of the English-speaking Caribbean, mainly because of language, culture, and religious background. The formation of this multiethnic community is a result of many historical events. These events are viewed differently, depending on one's ideology and school of thought. However, it is undeniably true that the mass migration orchestrated by the British colonizers separated people groups from their places of origin over a span of hundreds of years and many generations.

The British colonizers are responsible for transporting and settling laborers from India to the West Indies. These individuals, known as East Indians, were recruited mainly for indentureship, to replace the freed African slaves on the sugar plantations. The indenture system began in 1838 in Guyana and ended in 1917 in the southern Caribbean region. It is estimated that 240,000 East Indians came to Guyana and 144,000 to Trinidad during the indentureship period (Barrow 1996:342). In Trinidad, sixty-eight percent of the East Indians brought during this period were males, while only thirty-eight percent were females (Vertovec 1992:101). A similar gender disparity was found in Guyana, where males were also in the majority (Singh 1993: 223).

Crossing the *Kala Pani*

The term *kala pani* (black waters) encapsulates the treacherous journey of the East Indians leaving their villages, socioreligious environments, and

family ties to cross the “seven seas” to Guyana (British Guiana). Sumita Chatterjee (1997:82) suggested that the term *kala pani* is also a “metaphor” for life on the sugar plantation. Chandra Jayawardena (1968:428) reported that many emigrants perceived that crossing the black waters meant they would never return to their homeland.

In one account, Bharath, a young man from a remote village in Uttar Pradesh, was recruited by underhanded recruiters to accept a job without knowing that he was agreeing to leave his home and the land of his birth. Bharath assumed he was traveling to a nearby city for a job that promised high pay and good benefits. It never crossed his mind that he should say goodbye to his parents. This story of Bharath reveals the innocence of the indentured laborers and the devious practices of the recruiters in getting Indians to the British overseas sugar estates. Bharath was not aware he was going overseas for a job and would never see his family again. When he did realize it, it was too late because of the expenses incurred to transport him from his local village and house him in Calcutta. This young man’s story represents the limited understanding many immigrants had of the distance between India and the Caribbean, the cultural adjustment they would encounter, and the risk they faced of being permanently cut off from their family, caste, community, and country of birth (Chatterjee 1997:88). This could be one of the explanations behind the meaning of the phrase *kala pani*.

Munshi Khan, a survivor of the *kala pani* and the sugar plantation, writes in his memoir about the journey from Calcutta to Surinam. According to him, the recruiters were very convincing in their description of the benefits he would receive for working at a government job. On the ship to Suriname, his world changed forever. The mixing of castes was forbidden and was tantamount to going to hell. For a Brahmin, to eat and sleep next to a Dalit was impossible to imagine. Many Brahmins chose to fast rather than eat with other Indians from a lower caste (Khan 2005:82). Despite such treatment, many immigrants, including Brahmins, continued to board the ships to Guyana until 1917. It seems that agents were successful in enticing Indians to board the ships and cross the ocean. An account from an emigrant agent testifies that if the Indians had known about the *kala pani*, they would not have gone to the Caribbean (Chatterjee 1997:85).

The East Indian Immigrants

Many East Indians did not intend to stay in Guyana after completing the five-year contract on the plantations. Between 1838 and 1917, it is estimated that 75,808 indentured labors returned to India (Barrow 1996:342). Scholars have observed that many Indians who returned to

India struggled to assimilate into their society again and chose to re-emigrate to the British West Indies (Chatterjee 1997:55).

Scholars differ as to which states in India most East Indians came from and how many came from each province. However, they seem to agree that most of the East Indians came from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, while a smaller percentage came from places such as Bengal, Orissa, Punjab, and Mumbai. Most were from the lower castes (Vertovec 2001:626 627).

Singh's (1993:56) research suggests that the ratio of men to women was imbalanced. Scholars observe that the emigration percentage of Muslim women was higher than Muslim men, and the same was true of Brahmin women. The recruitment of women was mandated by policy, and thus, recruiters were paid a higher wage for women who signed up for the West Indies. One-third of the women who came were married, and the rest were single, widowed, or had run away due to family problems. These women were to have high morals, which was important to plantation life (Chatterjee 1997:59).

Many scholars fail to mention that a small percentage of the Indians came as Christians to the Caribbean. The religious affiliations of the East Indians were as follows: 83.6 percent Hindu, 16.3 percent Muslim, and about 1 percent Christian (Seecharan 1990:8). Records indicate that between 1876 and 1892, forty-six women who came to Guyana were Christian (Chatterjee 1997:50). These surprising statistics are a strong argument that challenges the status quo in Guyana and Trinidad regarding the origins of the Christian faith among East Indians. Christianity was not imported by White Christian missionaries but arrived in the British Caribbean in the same way as Hinduism and Islam.

Integration in an Alien Environment

One of the internal and external challenges that faced the immigrants was the issue of language. Scholars suggest that there were at least eight languages and about eleven dialects spoken on the plantations (Bronkhurst 1883:226; Tinker 1974:208). The East Indians adopted a common dialect known as "plantation Hindustani," which contributed to the loss of their native language in Trinidad and Guyana and the formation of a common language of communication (Vertovec 2001:631).

Plantation life could be described as legal slavery, where the East Indians had little or no control of their lives during the contracted period (Klein 2015, 35). During the indentureship period, most aspects of the East Indians' lives were governed by the Indian Immigration Ordinance (Klein 2015). Chatterjee (1997:141) observed that the ordinance was always slanted in favor of the plantation owners who had full control of the worker's

lives. For example, Brinsley Samaroo observed that British colonial policy was against any form of a socio-religious identity in Trinidad and Guyana. The British rulers argued that East Indians were not a separate people group but rather West Indians (2005:5:114). Eventually, after the indenture-ship period ended, East Indians slowly became recognized as citizens of the colony and were given opportunities to settle. By 1881, thirty-four percent of these indentured laborers were living outside the plantation, and by 1921, that number increased to fifty percent (Jayawardena 1966:222).

Sociological research has generally accepted that the East Indians' worldview was modified to fit the new context, mainly due to the necessity of survival in an alien environment. Bush's (1997:56) findings support the assumption that the religious practices of East Indians in the British West Indies evolves from the motherland. She further states that the reason for this difference is due to the restrictions encountered in practicing Hinduism in British territories. For example, Jayaram (2000:169) noted that caste no longer exists as a functional institution among Hindus in Trinidad. The modified religious practices became new traditions for Hindus in Guyana and led to the renaissance of Indian culture in the early twentieth century (Vertovec 2000:633). This position is supported by Edmonds and Gonzalez's (2010:179) and Janet Naidu's (2007) research indicating that Hinduism in the Caribbean is distinct from Indian Hinduism and can be considered an unique form of that religion.

The Birth of Christianity in British Guiana (Guyana)

The birth and development of Christianity in Guyana (formerly British Guiana) were influenced by the political, sociological, and religious pursuits of the invaders from Europe. The story begins with the Europeans' acquisition of land belonging to native people and the forced conversion to Christianity of all occupants of the newly acquired lands. The Dutch were the first to settle in Guyana and referred to the area as the "Wild Coast," which was considered uninhabitable by the Portuguese to the east and the Spanish to the west for many reasons, especially because the area was constantly flooded by saltwater, making the land of little use for planting (Ramerini 1998). The Dutch settlers developed the "Wild Coast" and made it usable for planting tobacco by a system known as the polder drainage method. In 1781, war between the Dutch and the British led to the British occupation of Guyana; however, the Dutch joined the French and regained control for a short time. In 1831, Britain became the legal owner of Guyana until its independence in 1966 (Merrill 1992).

History reveals that the policies implemented to govern Guyana during the period of European occupation favored the ruling class and

did not always have the laboring class' interests in mind. The first known Christian presence in Guyana was the Protestant Dutch Reformed Church, which built their first worship building in 1720. However, Blacks and natives were not allowed to become members. The Lutherans joined the Dutch Reformed Church in British Guiana and followed the same policy of barring Blacks and natives from joining their church (Melton 2005). History reveals that the missionaries, such as the Anglican missionaries in British Guiana, were also owners of plantations and slaves (Rooke 1977:21).

Britain was a major player in the development of British Guiana as a colony as well as in the spread of Christianity there. Britain tried to leave religious matters to the bishop of London, including the appointment and responsibilities of its priests. However, once the priests arrived in the British West Indies, they were subject to the authority of the British governor of the West Indies and not to the bishop of London (Hunte 2001:2:95). Until the end of slavery, the British Crown supported the Church of England's policies to limit religious instruction to non-British subjects. Historians note two possible reasons: (1) African slaves were using baptismal certificates as a means to gain freedom, and (2) baptism elevated a slave to a higher status (Edmonds and Gonzalez 2010:68).

With the removal of the restrictions on evangelizing non-British subjects, the doors were opened for many denominations to begin proselytizing more widely. The three established churches in Guyana—Presbyterian, Catholic, and Anglican—played a key role in the evangelization of Africans, Europeans, and especially the East Indians in British Guiana (Hunte 2001:2:106).

Anglican Church in Guyana

England saw religion as a necessity for its people and its colonies throughout its era of expansion. Historical documents indicate that it was a natural process for the British government to ensure that its citizens had adequate religious support in British Guiana. In the early stages of the Anglican Church in Guyana, it was common practice for both Anglican and Dutch Reformed members to share the same space of worship; however, this changed when the planters' class increased in size and in political and economic power (Pinnington 1968:365).

The Church of England enjoyed a short period of success in its evangelization efforts among the non-Whites, mainly because of financial support from England, which included paying the salaries for the clergy (357). However, this period of success was short-lived. The first notable weakness was in its leadership dynamics. Only priests from England were

allowed to serve in the parishes. The second challenge was the dependence on funds from England. In 1868, the British parliament stopped funding the clergy and shifted the responsibility to the local government in British Guiana. The third challenge was the language of the colony. The clergy struggled to share the gospel in the languages of the newly arrived immigrants (Titus 1999:351). Additionally, as the colony's population expanded, clergy numbers remained the same at fifty, which reduced the Church's effectiveness in the colony (Edmonds and Gonzalez 2010:75). Finally, the Presbyterian Church of Scotland and the Church of England were partners in the colony and benefited both financially and politically from the government. This alignment of church and state contributed to the Church's decline (78).

The 2012 census indicates a decline of membership in the Anglican Church when compared with the 2002 census. Currently the Anglican Church in Guyana has 38,962 members or 5.22 percent of the population, which decreased from 58,418 or 6.98 percent in 2002. The census provides two possible reasons for the decline in membership. Anglicans are joining other faiths and/or migrating to foreign lands (Bureau of Statistics 2002).

Catholicism in Guyana

Until 1834, Catholics were not present in British Guiana. However, on May 8, 1835, with the arrival of forty Portuguese laborers, mostly Catholics, from the island of Madeira, British Guiana would no longer belong to Protestants only (Menezes 1988:4:58). Between 1835 and 1882, a total of 30,809 Portuguese immigrated to British Guiana (Pillai, Tivary, and Keatinge 1924:10). The religious needs of the Portuguese did not go unnoticed; after ten years and many failed attempts, they were successful in getting a Catholic priest who was able to speak their native language (Menezes 1988:4:60). Jesuit priests were responsible for providing religious instruction, establishing and maintaining churches, and evangelizing non-Catholics (61). In 1857, the Catholic Church was the first mainstream church to begin evangelizing East Indians and Blacks on the sugar estates (63).

The Portuguese immigrants to Guyana became wealthy and controlled many shops and businesses; they also became involved in politics. However, after the independence of Guyana, the Portuguese population suffered a backlash for their support and alignment with British policy. This led to ethnic animosity that exploded in the 1960s against the Portuguese, who were victims of lootings, riots, and attacks on their culture and identity as Guyanese. This led to a mass migration of Guyanese Portuguese to the United States and Europe in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century (Ferreira 2006:75).

Two factors contributed to the decline of Roman Catholicism in Guyana. First was the political unrest and mass migration of Portuguese Catholics. By the 1960s, there were only 3,218 Portuguese in Guyana, compared to 35,000 in 1858 (*Wikipedia* 2017). The second reason was the aggressive proselytization of Roman Catholics by Protestants, such as Pentecostals and Adventists. The Catholic population dropped from 18.4 percent (107,000) to 7.1 percent (52,000) after the 1960s. An in-depth analysis of the 2002 and 2012 censuses supports the conversion theory of Roman Catholics to Pentecostalism and Adventism in Guyana. Within the same administrative regions and villages, the number of Roman Catholics declined, while two Protestant denominations, Adventism and Pentecostalism, had an increase in membership (Bureau of Statistics 2002). According to the census, the current Catholic population is mainly made up of Afro and Amerindian ethnic groups (Bureau of Statistics 2002).

Protestantism in Guyana

The entrance of Protestantism into British Guiana came through two avenues. The first was through nonconformist religious organizations, and the other was through the mission societies of England. The Moravians were the first Protestant Christians to enter British Guiana. They came at the invitation of a plantation owner and arrived in 1738 to minister to the slaves on his estate (Bronkhurst 1883:413). In 1808, the London (Baptist) Missionary Society was the first society to be established in England and the first to begin missionary activities in British Guiana (Platt and Holland 2003).

Missionary societies were birthed as a result of William Carey's promotion of missions to the people of the world religions. Ministers and lay-members were the catalysts in the formation of missionary societies that were independent from the established churches in Europe and they were the ones who felt a burden and a responsibility to share Christ with the non-Western world (Rooke 1977:79). The missionary societies received funding initially through grants from the British government, but eventually funding ceased, and the organizations were forced to become self-sustaining (Bayley 1909:292). Unlike the established churches, whose focus was the European population in the colony, the missionary societies concentrated their activities on the education and evangelism of slaves, East Indians, and even Amerindians (Dunn 1971:5).

The effectiveness of the established churches began to decline after the abolition of slavery, while the Protestant missionary societies and new denominations exploded with growth in British Guiana. The rise of nonmainstream Protestantism did not take place in isolation. In the Guyanese

context, political affiliation played a major role in race segregation and has affected evangelism both historically and presently. The historical records indicate that the established churches, mainly the Church of England, were first established to serve the ruling class but eventually began evangelizing the immigrants. When the Protestants came to British Guiana, their mission was primarily to the Afro- and Indo-Guyanese (Dunn 1971:4).

The Birth of Christianity among the East Indians

The influx of East Indians to British Guiana created many opportunities and challenges for the missionaries and the state churches. Between 1838 and 1850, little mission activity was initiated among East Indians on the estates for a number of reasons, such as, resistance from plantation owners, language, culture, and lack of motivation by missionaries to begin work among this people group. Henry Bronkhurst (1883:457, 458), a Wesleyan minister among the East Indians, quoted Reverend E. Bhose, who was among the first to begin work among the East Indians, as saying that one of the main reasons for rejecting Christianity was that if they converted, “they must remain in the country. They always had an expectation of returning home. . . . After ten, fifteen or twenty years we made no progress.” The missionary activities of Reverend Bhose indicate that his labor among the East Indians was in vain. They spurned Christianity because their goals and ambitions were set on making money and returning home to India.

After 1850, it became evident that the East Indians were becoming permanent residents. This motivated the Wesleyan, Anglican, and Presbyterian churches to correct their failure to witness to the East Indians since their arrival in 1838. In 1852, the Wesleyan Church in England sent its first missionary to work among the East Indians; however, he died from yellow fever within ten days of his arrival. It took another eight years for another missionary to arrive in the colony to continue evangelizing the East Indians. In 1871, the Church of England took steps to place more missionaries among the East Indians. However, the missionary activities of the Anglican, United Presbyterian, and Wesleyan Churches were met with failure. They were not able to successfully baptize East Indians. Some of the reasons for failure included: (1) the language and culture of the East Indians was foreign to the missionaries, (2) East Indians viewed the churches’ intentions with suspicion as agents of the government to make converts, and (3) the East Indians determined that they could not forsake the religion of their ancestors for the British religion (Bronkhurst 1883:459).

Protestant missionaries from newer denominations were successful, for many East Indians saw their churches as caring places that valued family, health, and progress. They also provided inner peace and freedom from illness and evil spirits and promoted a sense of belonging and equality that did not exist in the established churches. Many East Indians noticed that the new wave of Protestant churches promoted more indigenous involvement in leadership that did not exist in the traditional, established churches.

Wesleyan Methodist East Indian Mission

Henry Bronkhurst, a Wesleyan Methodist minister, arrived in 1861 to work among the East Indians in British Guiana. He authored three books on his experiences with the indentured laborers in British Guiana. He states that between 1861 and 1870, thirty-seven East Indians accepted Christianity and were baptized into full membership in the Wesleyan Methodist Church. In his 1876 report to the mission board in England, he stated that between 1876 and 1881, the church membership was as follows: 48, 47, 38, 43, and 45. Three reasons contributed to the lack of growth: (1) the missionaries' struggle to witness to and mentor new believers because of constant migration of the East Indian indentured laborers to other parts of British Guiana, (2) a high number of laborers returning to India after baptism and achievement of full membership in the Wesleyan Methodist Church (it is estimated that fifty East Indian Christians returned to India from 1876 to 1881), and (3) the death rate of East Indian Christians. About thirteen East Indian members died between 1876 and 1881 (Bronkhurst 1883:465-67). After independence from Britain in 1966, the mission activities among East Indians ceased.

Church of England East Indian Mission

In 1871, the Church of England brought missionaries to work specifically among the East Indians. Even though they brought one missionary from India who understood the language, culture, and religion of the Hindus, it was still challenging to baptize adult East Indians. In 1881, the membership was about 226; approximately 70 members were lost due to death or migration back to India. The report notes that many of the villages had no Christians when work began among them, but by 1881, the numbers had increased.

The challenges of witnessing to Hindus were threefold. First was the internal struggle within Hindus themselves. They refused to join the Christian Church because it had no immediate benefit for them. Hindus

expected to return back to India, and if they became Christians, they would have to stay in British Guiana. A second reason was that East Indians were very satisfied with the religion of their ancestors and felt no need to join another religion. A third reason was that they did not trust the missionaries. They would ask questions like, "How does the government pay you for making Christians of us, and how many Christians have you made?" (Bronkhurst 1883:457, 458). As a result of these challenges, the missionaries began working with children by setting up schools on the estates, in villages, and in cities. This method provided an opportunity for a breakthrough in witnessing to East Indian children. One missionary described Hindu adults as granite stones and Hindu children as plastic clay (455).

The progress of the Anglican Church among East Indians was limited mainly because of its support of colonial government policies and the plantation owners (Bronkhurst 1883:458). Scholars agree that the policies and worldview of the plantation owners became a stumbling block for Christian missionaries for decades because of the Church's alignment with the plantation owners and colonial authority that did not reflect the teachings of Jesus.

Canadian Presbyterian East Indian Mission

John Morton and his wife were Canadian Presbyterian missionaries who had worked among East Indians in Trinidad. They arrived in British Guiana on December 30, 1880, at the request of their sister denomination, the Presbyterian Church of Scotland in British Guiana, to evaluate the missionary work among East Indians and suggest improvements (Morton 1916:293). Morton's observations were the following. First, he found that there were four Protestant churches in British Guiana: Congregational, Wesleyan, Church of England, and Church of Scotland. However, Morton noted that only the last three were active among the East Indians. Second, he observed that the moral standards of the ministers was lacking. After his survey, he recorded that only two of the eleven Protestant ministers in the colony were not alcoholics, and those two were Canadians. Morton claimed that one of the significant reasons for the failure in evangelizing East Indians was consumption of alcohol by the Protestant ministers in British Guiana. Third, the established churches received grants from the colonial government, which paid the salaries of the ministers and funded the work among East Indians. According to Morton, the financial support received from the government became a hindrance in reaching East Indians.

The decision by the Wesleyan and Anglican denominations to hire Hindi-speaking East Indians as Bible workers to evangelize the Hindus

had a measure of success but was short-lived. Morton suggested two reasons why the established churches failed to be successful in baptizing Hindus on the plantation. First, there was a lack of organization and strategic planning in developing a structure for mentoring the Hindus who accepted Jesus Christ. Second, many East Indians were suspicious of their fellow East Indians who became Christians. They were called traitors and supporters of the White man's religion.

In his 1880 report, Morton indicates that there was a need for a Canadian Presbyterian Church presence in British Guiana to open the work among East Indians. In Morton's appeal, he states, "The Canadian church should push on to do something for the 60,000 to 70,000 Heathens there" (Dunn 1971:16).

The recommendations of John Morton for focusing on evangelizing the East Indians were partly followed, despite many hurdles. Gibson arrived in 1885, after completing one year of Hindi language and mission training in Trinidad, to advance the work among the East Indians in British Guiana that was first initiated by wealthy plantation owners such as Ewing-Crum, owner of Better Hope estate on the East Coast of Demerara (Morton 1916:298).

Gibson, the first missionary sent by the Canadian Presbyterian Church, observed two obstacles in his ministry. First, many East Indians accepted Jesus Christ but refused to be baptized into the White man's church because of their "Indian family and cultural ties" (Dunn 1971:32). Second, Gibson's experience suggested that the threat of Islam was an overwhelming challenge to mission activities among the East Indians. He stated, "When Christianity has once taken hold of the Muslims of this colony, the success of missions among our Indian population will be ensured" (*The Maritime Presbyterian* March 1888:81).

The sudden death of Gibson in 1888 as a result of yellow fever delayed the East Indian missionary thrust and revealed the harsh realities of working among East Indians in British Guiana. *The Presbyterian Witness* (January 20, 1912) labeled British Guiana as "The White Man's Grave" because of the high death rate and continuous illness of Canadian missionaries. Most of the missionaries coming from Canada struggled with the climate and living conditions, while a few managed for a short while before eventually succumbing to tropical diseases such as malaria, yellow fever, and typhoid.

It was not until 1896 that another Canadian missionary came to work among the East Indians in British Guiana. He was James Bassnet Cropper, son of the protector of St. Lucia. His background, fluency in Hindi, and knowledge of the culture prepared him for the vast work of evangelizing the Hindus in British Guiana (Dunn 1971:40).

Cropper's initial observations were the same as Morton's and Gibson's. Cropper's training in administration and leadership put him at an advantage in making progress among the East Indians. The government of the colony decided to offer land instead of providing passage back to India to the indentured laborers. Cropper stated, "We should be in a position to plan an agency in every settlement at the time of its foundation" (Presbyterian Church in Canada 1899:130). The expansion of the East Indian mission activities spread to highly populated villages such as the newly formed village, Helena (Dunn 1971:46).

In the 1900s, more missionaries were sent to work among the East Indians. Ross, a new missionary who arrived in 1900, recognized his dilemma when he stated, "Hinduism in the books is one thing; Hinduism in life is quite another" (*The Presbyterian Witness*, August 25, 1900). The sentiment of Ross seems to categorically summarize the challenges faced by foreign missionaries.

Ross continued where his predecessor left off. He recognized that the hospital was the best place to witness to East Indians. He wrote, "There the seed of the word very often finds good ground and bears an abundant harvest for eternity" (*The Presbyterian Witness*, August 25, 1900). Ross expressed the need for East Indians to maintain their culture after they accepted Christianity. He wrote, "We seek to have our people take more pride in their Hindi name. . . . We endeavor to eradicate the idea so readily entertained to be Christian-ized means to be Anglicized as well" (*The Presbyterian Witness*, August 25, 1900).

The increase of missionaries and Bible workers in the first decade of the twentieth century indicates some growth among East Indians. In 1918, the Canadian Presbyterian church membership was at 1,933, spread across the colony in fifty-nine congregations, and was nurtured by missionaries and twenty-nine Bible workers. There were forty-six Sunday schools, thirty-eight day schools, and one high school (Minutes of the Board of Foreign Missions, November 12, 1918).

Despite the apparent growth, the statistics suggest that the Canadian Presbyterian membership among East Indian population of 238,909 was about 0.8 percent. Looking at the statistics another way, for every member, there were 123 unreached East Indians in the colony. Fisher, the missionary in the county of Essequibo, observed in the 1911 census there was one Christian living for every ten Hindus and two Muslims (Presbyterian Church in Canada 1912, 86). About seven years later, the membership had increased to 3,000, and there were about thirty-five Bible workers in the colony. Also in the same year, British Guiana had the most missionaries at one time working among the East Indians—six ordained ministers (Presbyterian Church in Canada 1925:122). Dunn (1971:212) noted that after

thirty-one years, from 1885 to 1927, the Canadian Presbyterian Church in British Guiana “is not a statistical success story.”

The Role of Plantation Owners

East Indian evangelism did not begin with the missionaries but with committed estate owners who desired to see the gospel go to their indentured laborers from India. The relationship between the missionaries and plantation owners had both positive and negative effects on the sustainability of evangelization among the East Indians. On one side, in most cases, the missionary's success depended on the financial support of the plantation owners. At the same time, missionaries were at their disposal, and many times they were used as puppets. The estate owners had little interest in the success of the missionaries except when it benefited their cause. In some instances, they provided funding to assist the missionaries with educating the East Indians with the goal that they would continue to work on the plantation; other planters did not subscribe to such generosity. When the colony faced financial hardship, the planters felt they could no longer afford to support the mission (Dunn 1971:37).

In 1916, the planters willingly supported the Presbyterian missionaries in building schools. This move by the planters was intentional because in 1917, indentureship ended, and thus, the planters needed a way to retain their workforce (Dunn 1971:122). Two years later, however, the planters began to build mosques and temples for the East Indians in exchange for their service on the estates (Presbyterian Church in Canada 1919:86). This move by the planters to align themselves with East Indians is another example of the agenda of the planters, which was not the same as the agenda of the missionaries. The planters showed their disregard for religious observance and even the law of the land by keeping the wages of East Indians until they worked the Sabbath day (Sunday) and forcing the children to work long hours on school days and even on the Sabbath day (Fisher 1906).

Unfortunately, the historical record indicates that the foreign missionaries did not object to or speak out against the indenture system even though the policies of the plantation owners were in direct contradiction with the gospel preached by the missionaries. Ross only attacked the lack of education and abuse of the law which stated, “No youth between the ages of 10 and 16 shall be indentured to any employer who has not previously made all available provision for the instruction of such in reading, writing and elements of arithmetic” (*The Presbyterian Witness*, August 25, 1900). Many missionaries viewed the Blacks and East Indians as lower-class humans, which suggests that they were influenced by their culture and worldview (Dunn 1971:ii).

The lack of numerical success among the East Indians was a continuous problem for the missionaries. The missionaries learned that their efforts to baptize East Indians were generally met with disappointment. Gibson stated, "It is the rule rather than the exception to be disappointed several times" (*The Maritime Presbyterian* 1888:81). The assumptions were that the East Indians were poor, illiterate, and held on to evil beliefs even though they were slightly above the former African slaves on the social structure created by the British (Dunn 1971:70).

Impact of Bible Workers on the East Indians

Every missionary working in British Guiana from the established Protestant churches or missionary societies utilized locals as a bridge between the foreigners and East Indians. The Presbyterian, Wesleyan, Anglican, and Scottish Presbyterian churches called them catechists (Bible workers) or Bible women. These men and women seemed to play a major role in the success or failure of the East Indian work in British Guiana. In general, little is known about their work except for a few instances where they are mentioned (Dunn 1971:44).

Many of them were recent converts to Christianity whose mother tongue was Hindi. Most had little theological training. These men and women were assigned to work with the missionaries in reaching the unreached East Indian community. Their responsibilities were to visit the homes of the East Indians, visit the sick in the hospital, conduct Bible classes in the schools, gather children to attend church school, provide reading classes at night, and preach at open-air meetings in Hindi. On Sunday, they conducted religious services in Hindi (Presbyterian Church in Canada 1902:124, 125). The Bible workers received weekly training in areas such as "comparative religions, Bible subjects and English" (Dunn 1971:59). They lived as an example to their fellow East Indians. They were given a plot of land to plant crops, providing the opportunity to identify with their neighbors in order to share the gospel with them (Presbyterian Church in Canada 1903:132-35).

However, the custodians of the missionary activities in British Guiana were not the natives but the foreign missionaries. They concluded that the native Christians were not qualified and did not have the potential to advance as leaders among their own people groups (Dunn 1971:61). Cropper, who dreamed of starting a training school for Bible workers, was thwarted due to financial constraints. However, Scrimgeour made a breakthrough. In 1918, he conducted his first ten-day training for the native workers in religious instruction (Minutes of the Board of Foreign Missions 1918).

Despite the benefits of having Bible workers able to speak the language of the people, there were challenges as well. The Bible workers were accused by their fellow East Indians of siding with the oppressors by receiving money from the government to convert them to Christianity (*The Presbyterian Witness* 1904). Nohar, a Bible worker, was preaching at an outdoor meeting when a Brahmin came up on a donkey cart and shouted at the Christian preacher, accusing him of forsaking the religion of his fathers for the White's man religion (*The Presbyterian Witness* 1900). These two accounts reveal the cultural struggle faced by the native Bible workers who came into daily contact with Hindus and Muslims.

Method and Models

The missionaries relied on public evangelism as the most effective method. Fisher claimed that "open-air preaching was the only method of evangelization that was likely to succeed" (Presbyterian Church in Canada 1907:99). However, the formal services that were held in buildings for the East Indians failed to attract them except when a slideshow was presented. The East Indians preferred the outdoor meetings that addressed their questions (Dunn 1971:85).

According to Dunn, the missionaries combined education and evangelism for two reasons. First, the plantation owners and the colonial government did not see education for the East Indians as a priority; therefore, the missionaries filled the void. Many stories have been passed down from one generation to another indicating that the East Indians were also skeptical of education offered by the colony. Second, through education, the missionaries and the Bible workers were able to evangelize the Hindu children, who had the potential of influencing their parents (Dunn 1971:85). At first, the teachers were the Bible workers. Then eventually, teachers were trained to teach in the larger schools started by the missionaries in East Indian communities (Presbyterian Church in Canada 1910:109).

The Bible workers and the missionaries were well received when they visited the East Indians in their homes. The East Indians viewed the visits as an honor and treated their guests with respect. Both the missionaries and Bible workers were given undivided attention when it came to spiritual matters and Bible studies (Beramsingh 1970; Rambali 1970; Sukra 1969). These cottage meetings were one of the most successful models for engaging the East Indians. The cottage meetings centered around events such as birthdays, weddings, funerals, and recovery from sickness. Neighbors would visit the home where the meetings were being held. At the end of the meeting, the people remained for food and further discussion concerning spiritual matters, as presented by the Bible workers or missionaries (Dunn 1971:83).

Gibson was the first missionary who began visiting East Indians in the hospital, where he would read the Bible and preach to the sick (Presbyterian Church in Canada 1888:xii). Ross promoted hospital ministry; he stated that it was in the hospital that many East Indians first heard of the Great Physician and opened themselves to the gospel (*The Presbyterian Witness*, December 1, 1900). Jugmohan, a Brahman and a critic of Christianity before arriving in British Guiana, shares his conversion story. Jugmohan's life came to a halt when he got sick and ended up in the hospital. He was visited by a Bible worker who prayed for him, and thus, he received healing and was given a Bible. After leaving the hospital, his view of Christianity changed, especially concerning the life of Jesus. He eventually got baptized. This story illustrates one of the successful models used by missionaries (*The Presbyterian Witness* 1904). This model of reaching East Indians became part of the missionaries' daily witnessing, but it lacked the engagement of the entire family.

The sacrifices made by all the missionaries in British Guiana are still valued to this day by the recipients and their families. However, two of the longest-serving missionaries laid the foundation for others to follow in the great work among East Indians. Cropper was known for riding his bicycle with three coconuts—his meal for the entire day—while Scrimgeour was known for riding his bicycle for forty miles on Sunday to visit all the parishes (Cropper 1957:1). These men were known to walk many miles, “ate their food, slept in their cottages” (Dunn 1971:109).

The missionaries did not fully understand the culture but over time learned methods that were effective. Cropper was well received and respected by the East Indians. His celibacy and long white beard earned him a title given only to holy men. He was called a *sadhu*, which earned him respect and permission to be a teacher among the East Indians. He was also given the nickname *sahib*, a father figure title in the culture of East Indians. This demonstrates that he was seen as a person of maturity and authority (Dunn 1971:163). In essence, Cropper became an insider among the East Indians rather than just a foreign white missionary.

In summary, the excellent work started by the Canadian Presbyterian missionaries was broken by the weakest link, which was the failure to develop native East Indian Christians into leaders and ministers. The assumption was that the church would continue to send Canadian missionaries, a plan that failed due to financial and church leadership issues. The missionaries' tight grip on authority and the misguided theological shortcomings on the issue of race meant that the church did not have a succession of local leadership when a crisis ensued. Despite these shortcomings, it is evident that the church's missionary work laid the foundation for others to build on—the work among East Indians in Guyana continued.

Adventist East Indian Mission

The Adventist message came to Guyana in 1884; about fifty years after East Indians in the region were introduced to Christ. In 1892, the *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* recorded the first baptism of Hindus in British Guiana. Chadwick, a General Conference missionary, wrote, "I went out eighty-five miles in the country, held a few meetings, and baptized eight, and later sixteen were baptized in Georgetown, of whom three were Hindus. The church was strengthened, and I left it with a membership of forty-one" (1892:12).

According to the report by Chadwick, from the very beginning of the work among the Hindus, only a few accepted the gospel. However, a change of leadership in 1899 from Elder Hale to Elder David Babcock, who was transferred from Trinidad to Guyana, brought renewed effort among the East Indians (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists 1901:238). It appears that the new superintendent, Babcock, was an excellent planner and organizer of the Church's mission operations of sharing Jesus Christ with all people groups. In the first six months of his leadership, East Indians in Guyana were mentioned in the *Adventist Review*, and the Church voted to allot \$250.00 to carry out the work among them (238).

The challenges of sharing the gospel with Hindus were evident during this period. Babcock stated that Hindus would not attend meetings where blacks were present; therefore, he requested a separate evangelistic tent for "twenty-three thousand of these darkened souls" (Babcock 1903b:12). On November 19, 1902, Babcock complimented Brother Hyder for his work on Leguan Island because it was the first time he had seen twenty-five Hindu women present at a meeting, along with fifty men (Babcock 1902:15). Brother Hyder stated, "It seems very difficult to associate the different nationalities of this colony in religious services." However, he observed that once people join the Church they seem to unite under one roof for worship (15).

The leaders of the churches in British Guiana during the 1900s were willing to try different approaches to reach Hindus. The first approach, noted above, was to hire a native from India to work among Hindus. A second strategy was the use of education as an evangelistic tool. Babcock (1903a:14) wrote, "After considering the question with the young man and Brother Hyder, it seems to me that the best results can be obtained by school work among children." He continued by saying Hindus could be reached through their children because once the confidence of their children was won through education, the leaders had access to the parents.

Babcock seems to have championed the work among Hindus during the time he ministered in British Guiana. He made a profound statement

that continues to be relevant in the twenty-first century, when the Adventist Church still struggles to effectively reach Hindus. He stated, "Persons who have never labored among this class of people cannot realize the many difficulties to be encountered" (1904:17).

After Babcock, Hyder, and Belgrave left the mission field in British Guiana for other parts of the world, it seems that the mission focus moved from East Indians to Amerindians. E. C. Boyer, the president of the newly organized South Caribbean Union, stated in his report that the Roman Catholics were evangelizing the Amerindians, and he appealed for missionaries to go there to prevent a Roman Catholic takeover of the mission field. However, he also mentioned that the young East Indians should be reached by our schools, seeming to imply that traditional public evangelism had not been successful among them (Boger 1918:17).

Thirteen years after the last major emphasis given to evangelizing East Indians, a general meeting was held in Georgetown, attended by all twelve churches. The leaders reported, "Although a few of this race are faithful members of our church, it can hardly be said that our work for them has begun. In Trinidad, there are more East Indians than in Guiana; still we do not have a worker in either place devoting his time to this people. Urgent calls are coming from them; and to these calls we must no longer turn a deaf ear" (Andross 1925:21).

East Indian Missionaries

Just over two decades later, in the 1950s, Roy McGarrell recalls that the first East Indians to begin witnessing to Hindus in Guyana were from Trinidad, including Pastor Charles Manoram, Pastor Charles Dirgoonanan, and Pastor Paul Rambharose and his son David Rambharose. The first Indo-Guyanese pastor to serve in Guyana was Pastor James Persaud. Pastor Subramani Wailu began his ministry in the 1960s and continues to fund church planting projects in Guyana today (McGarrell 2013). Two other notable pastors were Peter Dookie and Bertie Toolsiram. Dookie was a very successful evangelist among all ethnic groups, especially Hindus. Toolsiram also worked tirelessly among the Hindus.

Philbert Ramotar, a Guyanese pastor, was one of the most successful at witnessing among Hindu people. Many of the Guyanese pastors mentioned above came into the Adventist Church due to his ministry. According to McGarrell (2013), Pastor Ramotar's ministry began in the 1950s and continued into the 1990s. Many churches were planted from his work in Hindu villages. He was known to bring many Hindus into the church through praying for them when they were sick and casting out evil spirits. Ramotar also testifies of a miracle that took place when an attacker tried to

kill him with a dagger. "The Dagger would not go in," said the assailant, whose hand became paralyzed for seven days (Fearing 1960:22).

After four years, seven evangelistic campaigns were held and 107 persons were baptized. Even his attacker started Bible studies (Fearing 1960:22, 23). Sadly, after Ramotar left one village to move on to another one, the church that he had planted there often fell apart because there was no system in place to care for the new believers. Pastor Margret Ramsarran, treasurer of the Guyana Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, was one of the persons who joined the Adventist Church through a campaign held by Brother Ramotar. She concurs that most of the former Hindus eventually left the Church due to poor mentorship (Ramsarran 2012).

In 1980, the newly elected president, Pastor Martinborough of the Guyana Adventist Church, made a renewed effort. He appointed two East Indian Bible workers, Bertie Toolseram and Phillip Joseph. These two evangelists started many congregations among the East Indian communities across Guyana. However, in 1980, evangelist Phillip Joseph was involved in a traffic accident that claimed his life. Evangelist Toolseram continued making inroads among East Indians and was honored for baptizing over one thousand members into the Adventist Church (personal email from Gordon Martinborough, October 13, 2013).

In 1983, the Caribbean Union took some proactive steps to continue the work among Hindus. They invited Pastor Justin Singh, an evangelist from New Delhi, India, to conduct evangelistic meetings in their territory. He used Hindi music as a bridge to reach Hindus. This approach was very successful in bringing Hindus to a saving relationship with Jesus Christ; however, many of these former Hindus left the Church soon after.

Implications of an Ethnocentric Church

In the Caribbean, the Adventist Church is mostly an Afro-Caribbean church based on the identity of its leaders and their leadership style. The church is about ninety-five percent Afro-Caribbean even though the Indo-Caribbean peoples make up the largest people group in both Guyana and Trinidad. One of the challenging questions first raised in the 1900s is still relevant today: "Is there room for East Indians in the Adventist Church?" This question has many facets and would require another paper to explore completely.

An ethnocentric church is defined as one that ignores the uniqueness of other people groups and forgets that each ethnic group has a culture that shapes its identity. This identity is what each person carries with them wherever they go, including to church, and that ethnic identity is not necessarily against biblical teachings (Hiebert 1999:378). The Adventist

Church in the Caribbean does not appear to be sufficiently flexible to accommodate other people groups. It tends to impose many of the same nonessentials that the Western missionaries imposed on native Guyanese a century ago when they presented the Adventist message.

For example, one of the unwritten rules of dress is that men must wear a Western suit to preach in or to participate on the platform rather than native formal wear more appropriate to the climate. All of the photos examined in *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* indicate that both foreign and indigenous leaders wore a jacket and tie in temperatures above eighty-five degrees Fahrenheit (Delafield 1951:19). There seems to be an underlying attitude that to follow Christ, one must adopt the culture of the majority in the church. Currently, it is the dominant group in the church that is imposing and adding many cultural requirements to the gospel and implying that for a Hindu to follow Jesus, he or she must become “one of us” by dressing, talking, eating, and behaving in the same manner as the majority ethnic group.

A second example of ethnocentrism is the church hymnal used in the Caribbean. It is made up entirely of Western hymns adopted from the United States. The issue is not the songs but how local music written in the context of the culture is viewed and treated. The indigenous songs of East Indians are treated as inferior to the songs in the church hymnal even though the message and composition of the songs meet biblical standards.

Another challenge to any ethnocentric church is the difficulty of engaging members on important issues regarding cross-cultural evangelism. The prevailing attitude is that the issues would be resolved easily if the minority would simply accept the policies of the majority. This has created significant problems for social integration in the Caribbean Adventist Church.

Pentecostal Movements among the East Indians

The last to arrive, Pentecostalism, came to Guyana in the 1950s as a grassroots movement that spread among all ethnic groups. In 1956, the Church of God of Prophecy was the first to arrive in British Guiana, followed by the Assemblies of God Church, and the Church of God World Missions Church in 1957. The third group was the Churches of Christ, who joined their sister organizations in 1959 (World Mission Atlas Project 2017).

According to the 2012 census, the Pentecostal movement is the second largest religious group, with a national average of 22.8 percent. When compared with the 2002 census, the movement grew from 17.4 to 22.8 percent. The 2002 Census reveals that the Pentecostals are making inroads

in most villages, including East Indian communities (Bureau of Statistics 2002). Pentecostalism is appealing to East Indians, especially Hindus, for a number of reasons: (1) it connects with all levels of society, (2) it is an indigenous movement that promotes leadership from within the ethnic group, (3) its theology is based on faith healing and the prosperity gospel, and (4) it seeks to meet the physical needs and spiritual longings of East Indians rather than providing intellectual discourse.

Summary

This article surveyed the history of how Christianity came to Guyana and how it was intertwined with culture, religion, and politics. It began with ministers who were sent mainly to meet the religious needs of the British subjects. This paved the way for both the established churches and missionary organizations to set up their individual denominations in British Guiana. With the abolition of slavery, a new workforce arrived from India. These workers changed the dynamics of the colony in ways that many, including the East Indians, did not anticipate.

The Anglican, Wesleyan, Roman Catholic, and the Canadian Presbyterian Churches were involved in witnessing to the East Indians. The Anglican, Wesleyan, and Roman Catholic churches relied on traditional models. They were concerned only with baptizing the East Indians. They had no plans for them after baptism. For example, they expected East Indians to join the existing churches and adopt the English way of worship (Dunn 1971:11, 12). The Canadian Presbyterian Church, on the other hand, was totally dedicated to evangelizing the East Indians. They focused on helping the Indians with education, witnessed to them in their native language, and respected their culture. They established separate worship centers for the East Indians, spent time with them in their homes and villages, learned the language of the East Indians, and used cottage meetings instead of tent evangelism (Dunn 1971:83). Their impact is still felt today in most Indian communities across Guyana. In contrast to the Adventist Church, they were focused on starting new churches and generally did not apply contextualized approaches. Adventists experienced far less success reaching the East Indians than they did the Afro-Guyanese. This was another roadblock for East Indians who wished to join the Adventist Church, which had become a predominately Afro church. The Adventist Church's success among the East Indians was a result of certain leaders. For example, in 1901, Babcock took a contextualized approach to reaching the East Indians. He allowed them to have their own meetings and used education as a tool to reach them. He brought a Hindi-speaking Bible worker from India. The second leader was Martinborough, who followed a similar approach.

The challenges faced by the all the churches that attempted to evangelize the East Indians were numerous. The first major challenge the missionaries faced was a misunderstanding of the East Indian worldview. Many missionaries had the assumption that because East Indians were poor, uneducated, unsophisticated, and lacked resources, they would accept the White man's religion just as their counterparts, the Africans, had. They soon realized that this was not the case, and this great disappointment led many missionaries to assume that British Guiana was a cursed place. They also blamed the religious leaders, such as the Brahmans, for the low number of East Indians who accepted the gospel (Bronkhurst 1883:461).

Missionaries were also unsure of how to make inroads into the social network of the East Indians. In many instances, East Indians accepted the gospel but could not abandon the religion of their families and community. The missionaries failed to acknowledge the needs and desires of the East Indians, such as their wish to become wealthy and return to India rather than accept a foreign way of life that cut them off from their families and communities locally and back home in India. East Indians had their own language, culture, and religious background that they were not ready to give up for the sake of the missionaries.

Racism among the people groups in the country also impacted the environment in which mission work took place. The missionaries encountered prejudice that existed between the Africans and East Indians. The missionaries' own philosophy that the East Indians were not capable of becoming leaders and ordained ministers among their own people groups hindered church growth. The missionaries' worldview led them to believe that East Indians and Africans were not equal to them and must be treated as such.

Some challenges faced by the missionaries could not be totally avoided. The first was the color of the missionaries; it reminded the East Indians of their oppressors. It was difficult for them to trust the missionaries, even the Bible workers who were former Hindus or Muslims. The Church's alignment with the planter class and government created a disadvantage for the missionaries. Some East Indians may have valued the religious services but refused to be part of or identify with the foreigners' religion.

An additional challenge affecting the productivity of the missionaries in British Guiana was susceptibility to tropical diseases. Recruitment and long-term service were a struggle because the colony was labeled the as a White man's graveyard.

In conclusion, the missionaries felt they had failed because the number of baptisms among East Indians was not equal to that of Africans. However, the seeds sown by the missionaries through education and

evangelism continue to be effective in reaching East Indians in the twenty-first century. The methods and models used by missionaries, especially the Canadian Presbyterian churches, were advanced for their time and could have been more successful if applied consistently.

Works Cited

- Andross, E. E. 1925. The Guiana Mission. *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* 102, no. 13 (March): 21.
- Babcock, David. C. 1902. British Guiana. *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* 79, no. 46 (November 18): 14-15.
- _____. 1903a. British Guiana. *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* 80, no. 36 (September 10): 12-13.
- _____. 1903b. Tidings From the Guianas. *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* 80, no. 46 (November 19): 14-15.
- _____. 1904. British Guiana, South America. *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* 81, no. 34 (August 25): 17.
- Barrow, Christine. 1996. *East Indian Family Patterns*. Oxford, England: Ian Randle Publishers.
- Boger, E. C. 1918. Report from South Caribbean Conference. *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* 95, no. 20 (May 16): 16-17.
- Bronkhurst, H. V. P. 1883. *The Colony of British Guiana and Its Labouring Population*. London: T. Woolmer.
- Bureau of Statistics. 2002. *The Co-operative Republic of Guyana Population and Housing Census 2002 National Census Report*. Georgetown, Guyana: Bureau of Statistics.
- Chadwick, L. C. 1892. Trinidad and British Guiana. *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* 69, no. 25 (June): 396.
- Chatterjee, Sumita. 1997. Indian Women's Lives and Labor: The Indentureship Experience in Trinidad and Guyana, 1845-1917. PhD diss., University of Massachusetts Amherst.
- Cropper, Grace. 1957. The Canadian Presbyterian Mission. Unpublished memoirs. Quoted in Charles Alexander Dunn, *The Canadian Mission in British Guiana: The Pioneer Years, 1885-1926*. Master's thesis, Queen's University, 1971.
- Cropper, John. B. 1907. "From Demerara." *The Presbyterian Record*, January-December, 106-107.
- Delafield, R. E. 1951. British Guiana Calls. *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* 128, no. 25 (June): 19-20.
- Dunn, Charles Alexander. 1971. *The Canadian Mission in British Guiana: The Pioneer Years, 1885-1926*. Master's thesis, Queen's University.
- Edmonds, Ennis Barrington, and Michelle A. Gonzalez. 2010. *Caribbean Religious History: An Introduction*. New York: NYU Press.

- Fearing, A. 1960. The Dagger Would Not Go In. *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* 137, no. 51 (December 22): 21-22.
- Ferreira, Jo-Anne S. 2006. Madeiran Portuguese Migration to Guyana, St. Vincent, Antigua and Trinidad: A Comparative Overview. *Portuguese Studies Review* 14:63-85.
- Fisher, R. G. 1906. Annual Reports 1906-1907. University of Guyana, Guy. Quoted in Charles Alexander Dunn, *The Canadian Mission in British Guiana: The Pioneer Years, 1885-1926*. Master's thesis, Queen's University, 1971.
- General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. 1900. Board of Trustees of Foreign Mission Board of Seventh-day Adventists. January 13, 1899 to February 21, 1901. October 23. Battle Creek, MI: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.
- _____. 1901. Board of Trustees of Foreign Mission Board of Seventh-day Adventists. January 13, 1899 to February 21, 1901. May 2. Battle Creek, MI: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.
- Gibson, John. 1888. Demerara. *The Maritime Presbyterian*. March, 80-81.
- Heibert, Paul. 1999. Cultural Differences and the Communication of the Gospel. In *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement*, edited by Ralph Winter and Steven Hawthorn, 3rd ed., 378-83. Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library.
- Hunte, Keith. 2001. Protestantism and Slavery in the British Caribbean. In *Christianity in the Caribbean: Essays on Church History*, edited by Armando Lampe, 2:126-153. Kingston, Jamaica: University of the West Indies.
- Jayaram, N. 1966. Religious Belief and Social Change: Aspects of the Development of Hinduism in British Guiana. *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 8, no. 02 (January): 211-40.
- _____. 2000. The Dynamics of Language in Indian Diaspora: The Case of Bhojpuri/Hindi in Trinidad. *Sociological Bulletin* 49, no. 1 (March): 41-62. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23619888>.
- _____. 2006. The Metamorphosis of Caste among Trinidad Hindus. *Contributions to Indian Sociology* 40, no. 2 (June): 143-173.
- Jayawardena, Chandra. 1968. Migration and Social Change: A Survey of Indian Communities Overseas. *Geographical Review* 58, no. 3 (July): 426-49. JSTOR. www.jstor.org/stable/212565.
- Khan, Munshi Rahman. 2005. *Autobiography of an Indian Indentured Labourer*. Delhi, India: Shipra Publications.
- McGarrell, Roy. 2013. Interview by author. Maracas Valley, Trinidad and Tobago. October 18.
- Melton, Gordon. 2005. Guyana. In *Encyclopedia of Protestantism*. Accessed December 20, 2017. <http://protestantism.enacademic.com/288/Guyana>.
- Menezes, Mary N. 1988. The Maderian Portuguese and the Establishment of the Catholic Church in British Guiana, 1835-98. In *After the Crossing: Immigrants and Minorities in Caribbean Creole Society*, edited by Howard Johnson, 4:57-78. London, UK: Frank Cass and Company, 1988.
- Merrill, Tim, ed. 1992. *Guyana: A Country Study*. Washington, DC: GPO for the Library of Congress. <http://countrystudies.us/guyana/5.htm>.

- Minutes of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in Canada 1896-1926. Vols. VII11-XXXVII11. Knox College, Toronto, Canada. Quoted in Charles Alexander Dunn, "The Canadian Mission in British Guiana: The Pioneer Years, 1885-1926" Master's thesis, Queen's University, 1971.
- Morton, John. 1880. The Morton Papers, Morton's Diary for 1880. The Presbyterian Church in Canada Archives. Knox College, Toronto, Canada. Quoted in Charles Alexander Dunn, "The Canadian Mission in British Guiana: The Pioneer Years, 1885-1926" Master's thesis, Queen's University, 1971.
- _____. 1916. John Morton of Trinidad, Pioneer Missionary of the Presbyterian Church in Canada to the East Indians in the British West Indies: Journals, Letters and Papers. Edited by Sarah Morton. Toronto, Canada: Westminster.
- Naidu, Janet. 2007. Retention and Transculturation of Hinduism in the Caribbean. *Guyana Journal*, March. <http://www.guyanajournal.com/hinduismcaribbean.html>.
- Pillai, Devan B. P. K., T. N. Tivary, and G. F. Keatinge. 1924. *Reports on the Scheme for Indian Emigration to British Guiana*. Simla, India: Monotype Press.
- Pinnington, J. 1968. Factors in the Development of the Catholic Movement in the Anglican Church in British Guiana. *Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church* 37 no. 4:355-369.
- Presbyterian Church in Canada. 1888. The Acts and Proceedings of the Fourteen General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. Halifax, Canada: Presbyterian Church in Canada, 13-21, June.
- _____. 1899. The Acts and Proceedings of the Twenty-Fifth General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. Hamilton, Canada: Presbyterian Church in Canada, 14-22, June.
- _____. 1902. The Acts and Proceedings of the Twenty-Eight General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. Toronto, Canada: Presbyterian Church in Canada, 11-19, June.
- _____. 1903. The Acts and Proceedings of the Twenty-Nine General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. Vancouver, Canada: Presbyterian Church in Canada, 9-17, June.
- _____. 1907. The Acts and Proceedings of the Twenty-Nine General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. Montreal, Canada: Presbyterian Church in Canada, 5-13, June.
- _____. 1910. The Acts and Proceedings of the Thirty-Six General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. Nova Scotia, Canada: Presbyterian Church in Canada, 1-9, June.
- _____. 1912. The Acts and Proceedings of the Thirty-Eight General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. Edmonton, Canada: Presbyterian Church in Canada 5-13, June.
- _____. 1919. The Acts and Proceedings of the Forty-Five General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. Ontario, Canada: Presbyterian Church in Canada, 4-12, June.
- _____. 1925. The Acts and Proceedings of the Forty-Five General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. Toronto, Canada: Presbyterian Church in Canada, 3-9, June.

- The Presbyterian Witness*. 1900, August 25. Nova Scotia, Canada. Quoted in Charles Alexander Dunn, *The Canadian Mission in British Guiana: The Pioneer Years, 1885-1926*. Master's thesis, Queen's University, 1971.
- _____. 1904. Nova Scotia, Canada. Quoted in Charles Alexander Dunn, *The Canadian Mission in British Guiana: The Pioneer Years, 1885-1926*. Master's thesis, Queen's University, 1971.
- Ramsarran, Margaret. 2012. Interview by author. Georgetown, Guyana. November 12.
- Rooke, Patricia T. 1977. *The Christianization and Education of Slaves and Apprentices in the British West Indies: The Impact of Evangelical Missionaries (1800-1838)*. PhD diss., University of Alberta. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses.
- Samaroo, Brinsley. 2005. Politics and Afro-Indian Relations in Trinidad. In *Calcutta to Caroni and the Indian Diaspora*, edited by John Gaffar La Gurrer and Ann Marie Bissessar, 5:109-189. St Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago: The University of the West Indies.
- Seecharan, Clem. 1990. *Indians in British Guiana, 1919-1929: A Study in Effort and Achievement*. PhD diss., University of Warwick. http://wrap.warwick.ac.uk/2700/1/WRAP_THESIS_Shiwcharan_1990.pdf.
- Singh, Odaipaul. 1993. *Hinduism in Guyana: A Study in Traditions of Worship*. PhD, University of Wisconsin.
- Titus, Noel. 1999. Missionary Challenges in Guyana, 1842-1892. *Anglican and Episcopal History* 68, no. 3 (September): 345-71. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42612037>.
- Vertovec, Steven. 1992. *Hindu Trinidad: Religion, Ethnicity and Socio-Economic Change*. Warwick University Caribbean Studies. London, UK: Macmillan Caribbean.
- _____. 2001. Hinduism in Diaspora. In *Caribbean Sociology: Introductory Readings*. Edited by Rhoda Reddock and Christine Barrow, 622-642. Kingston, Jamaica: Ian Randle Publishers.
- Wikipedia. 2017. Demographics of Guyana. December 20, 2019. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demographics_of_Guyana#cite_note-16.



Clifmond Shameerudeen is the director for the General Conference Center of South Asian Religions. His DMiss dissertation focused on understanding the worldview of Guyanese East Indians.